

# *Bay Lake History*

## *"101"*

# *Introduction*

*Welcome to Bay Lake History 101, a presentation that attempts to tell some of the stories of some of the original settlers of our community.*

*It was created for those who love Bay Lake because when we learn about our history we strengthen our community.*

*Even those who slept through history classes will find it interesting. The cast of characters will become familiar. Go through it more than once and you'll think of them as your friends (and your boat rides will be more interesting).*

*Duration: 15 minutes*

*Numerous historians and authors have written about our area. See the last slide (i.e. "Sources").  
The accuracy of the details isn't guaranteed.*

*Questions or comments : Contact Paul Erickson at [ericksonpaulsue@aol.com](mailto:ericksonpaulsue@aol.com)*

# *Bay Lake History "101"*

## *Curriculum*

- *Early Native Americans*
- *Voyageurs & The Fur Trade*
- *Railroads*
- *Settlers*
- *Lumber*
- *Schools*
- *Early "Bay Lakers"*

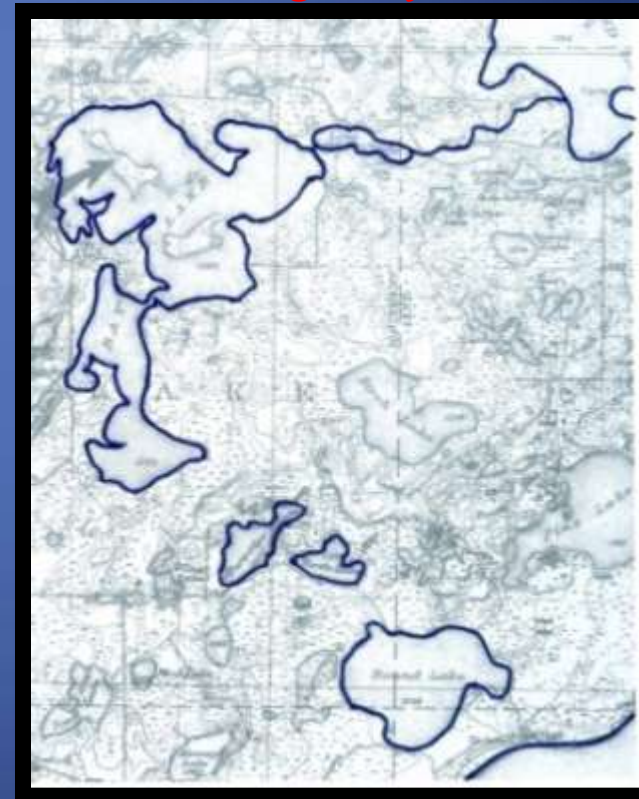
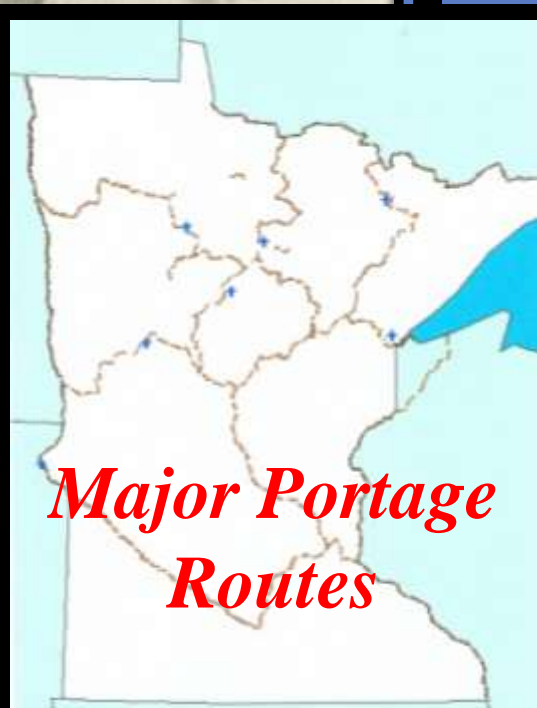
# *Early Native Americans*

- *12,000 BC—Paleo-Indian Period*  
*Man came to our area as the glaciers receded.*
- *8,000 BC—Archaic Period*  
*Nomadic hunters, fisherman, gatherers of berries, nuts & weeds.*
- *800 BC—Woodland Period*  
*Nomadic hunters, bow & arrows, ceramic vessels and burial grounds (evidence of settlements in the Gull Lake area).*
- *900 AD—Late Prehistoric Period*  
*Less nomadic, farming (wild rice), settlements move from rivers to lakeshore.*
- *1600 AD—Historic Period*  
*The fur trade was active. The Dakota were displaced by Ojibwe.*

# *French-Canadian Voyageurs & The Fur Trade 1600 & 1700's*



*The route from Lake Superior to the Dakota settlement at Kathio on Mille Lacs was through Bay Lake*



# Dakota (Sioux) & Ojibwe





# Battle Point - 1800

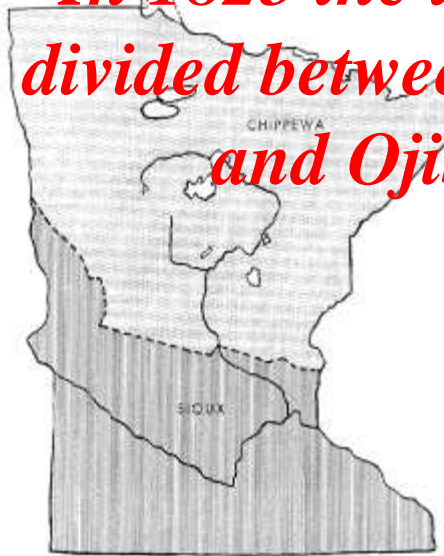
*One of the final battles between the Dakota and Ojibwe  
was on Bay Lake's Battle Point*



*This wall sized painting by Sarah Thorp Heald, which  
depicts a native settlement on Battle Point, is on display at the  
Crow Wing County Courthouse*

# Grand Conference & Cessions/Reservations

*In 1825 the lands are divided between Dakota and Ojibwe*



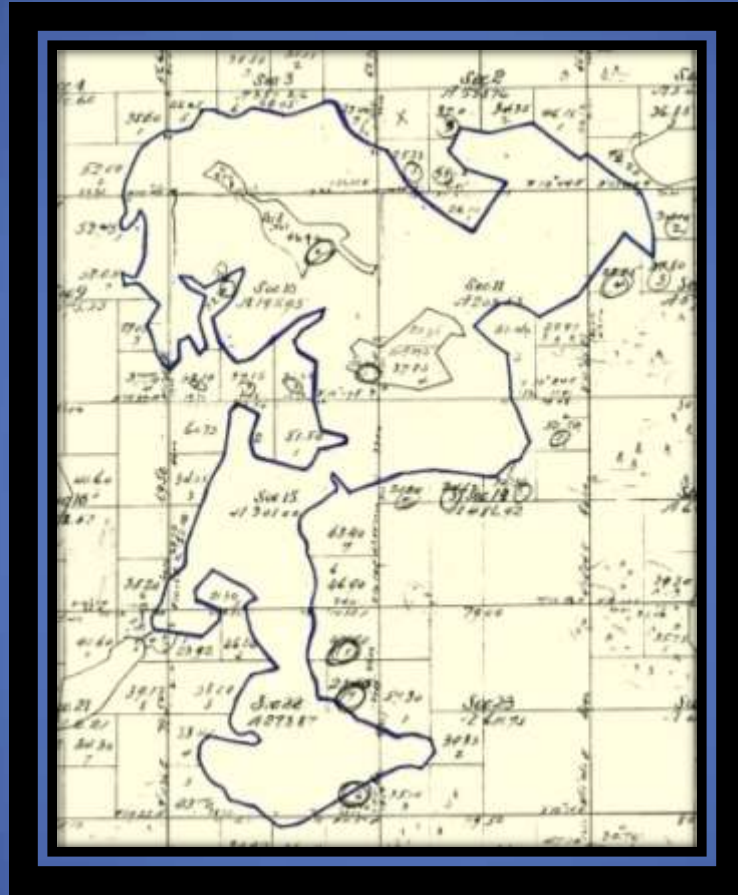
The dividing line between the Dakota (Sioux) and the Ojibwe (Chippewa) lands was drawn up at a "grand conference" held at Prairie du Chien in 1825 to try to end the continual warfare between the two tribes.

*By 1858 the Dakota and Ojibwe are confined to reservations*





# 1857 Survey Map



*Sessebegamah* = "Lake of many passages or bays"  
= Bay Lake

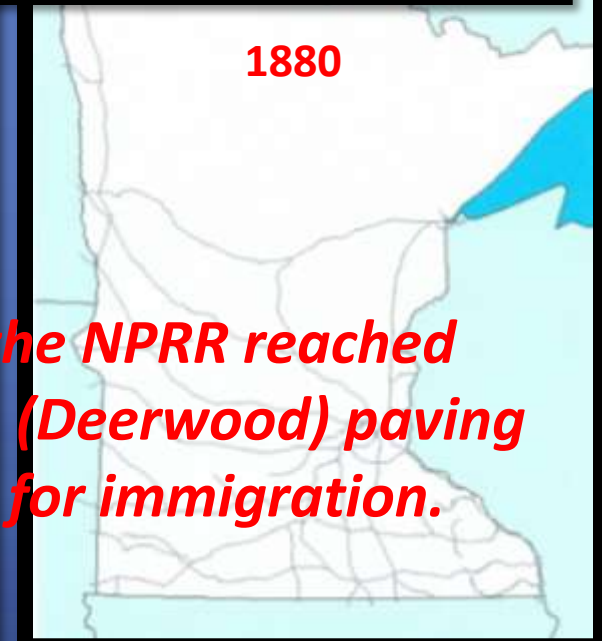
# *Railroad Expansion & Immigration*



*(Later) Deerwood Soo Line Depot*



1870



1880

*In 1871 the NPRR reached  
Withington (Deerwood) paving  
the way for immigration.*



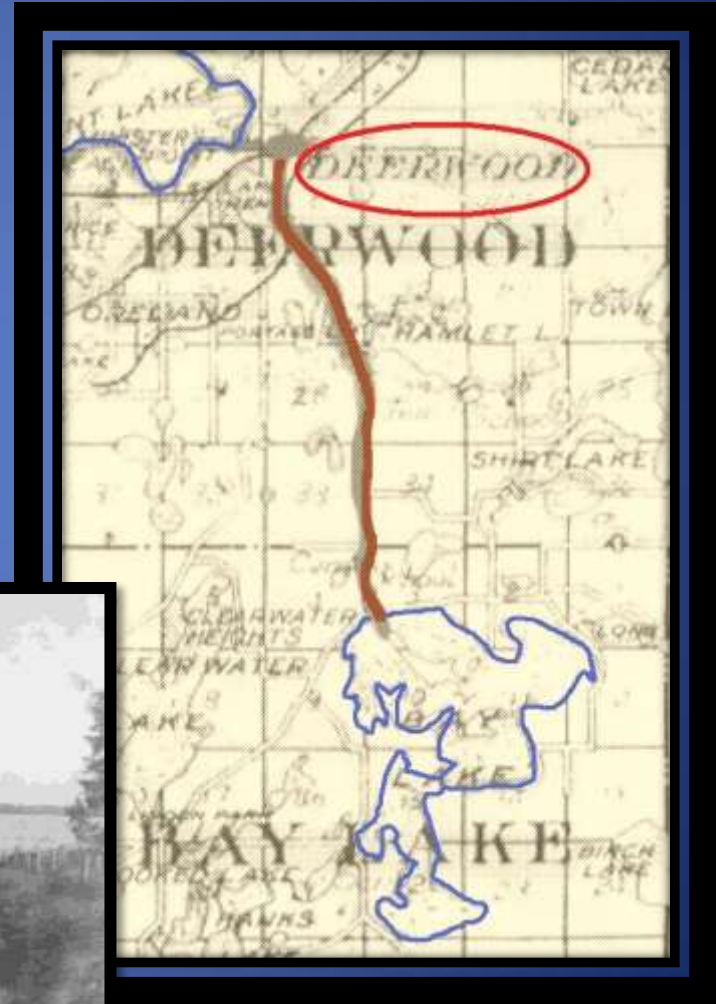
*Original Withington NPRR Depot*

# Sessabegamah Trail

*With the building of the NPRR line, came the settlement of Withington. Robert Archibald, who was on the first survey crew, was the first homesteader.*

*(When postal service was established the name was changed to Deerwood to avoid confusion with Worthington).*

*Many of Bay Lake's early settlers came down the Sessabegamah Trail from Withington/Deerwood.*

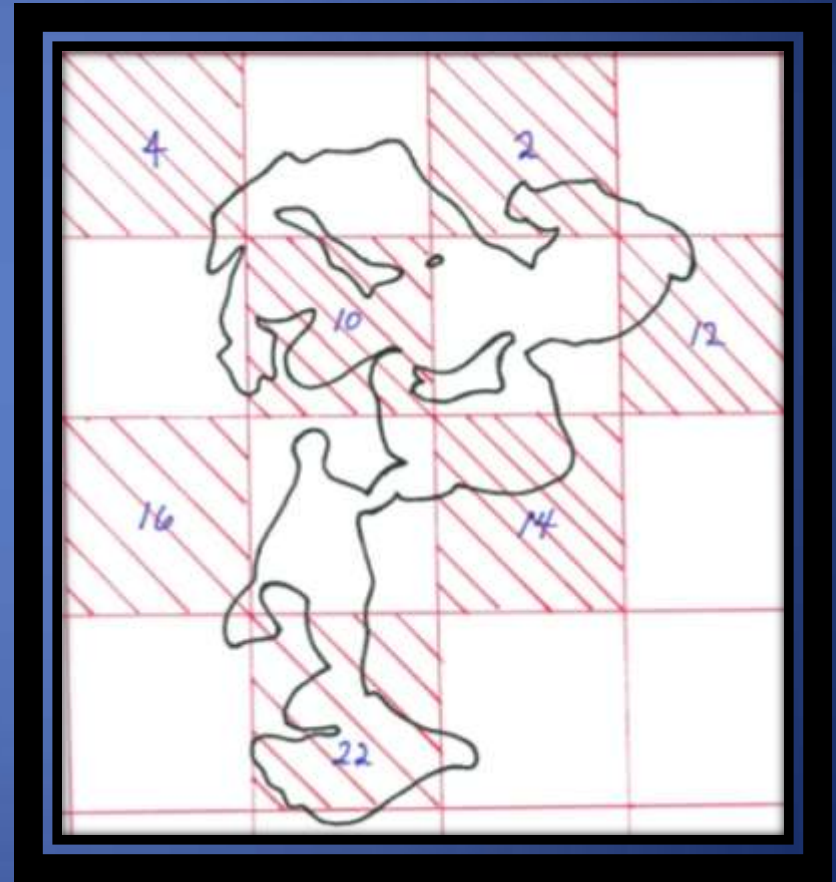


# Homestead Sections (Even #) vs. NPRR Sections (Odd #)

To promote the building of transcontinental rail lines, the US Gov't gave every odd numbered section within 6 miles of the new line to the railroad.

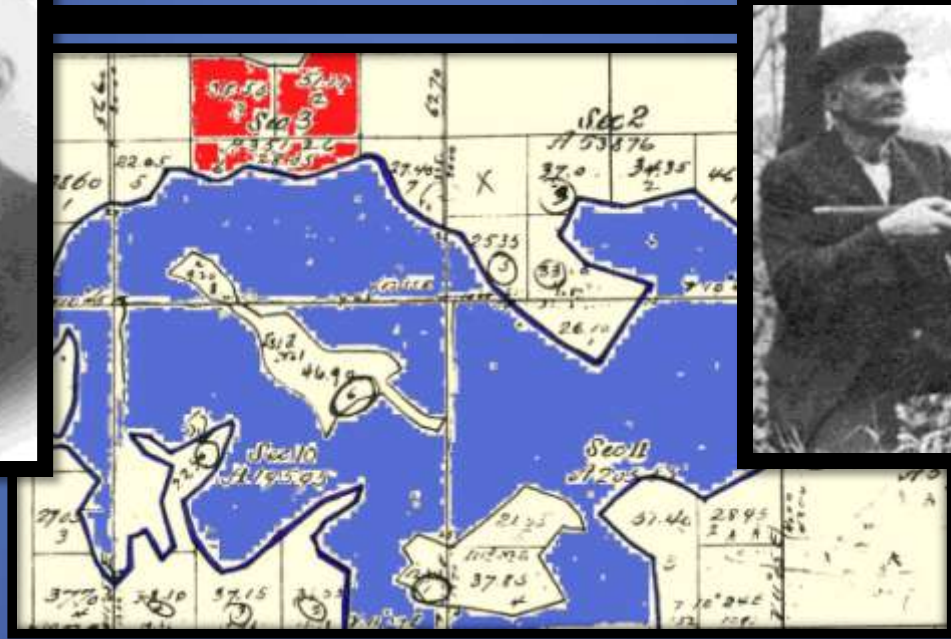
Bay Lake is within 6 miles of the line that was built from Lake Superior to Puget Sound (which goes through Deerwood). So approximately half of Bay Lake was available for homesteading. The land that was given to the railroad was available for purchase.

This affected the timing and pattern of development. For example, the land that is now Bay Lake Shores was homesteaded while Eaglewood had to be purchased.





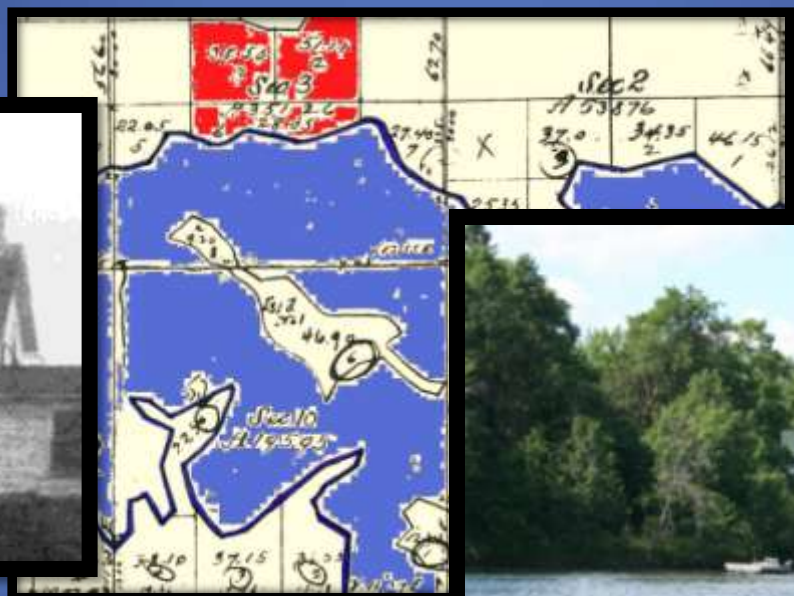
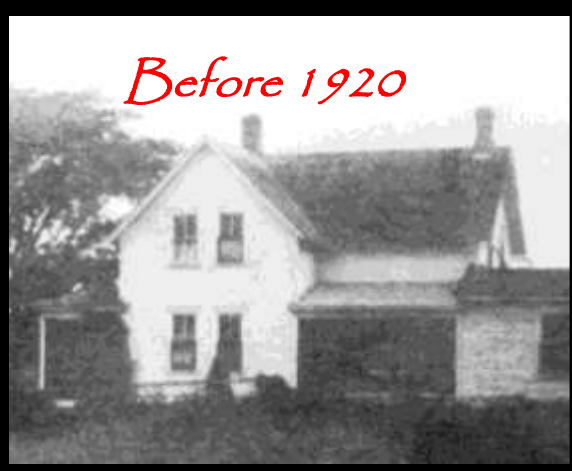
# Dave & Tillie Archibald



*In 1882, Dave & Tillie Archibald, became the first Bay Lake settlers. Dave had been born in Nova Scotia in 1845. Although they intended to homestead, the land was in Section 3 (odd numbered) so it had to be purchased.*



# Achibald (Continued)



*Their original log home was replaced prior to about 1920. The house was later purchased by the Below family from Kansas.*

*The property is now owned by Below decedents (Blistains & Wolfs).*

# Nicolas Newgard

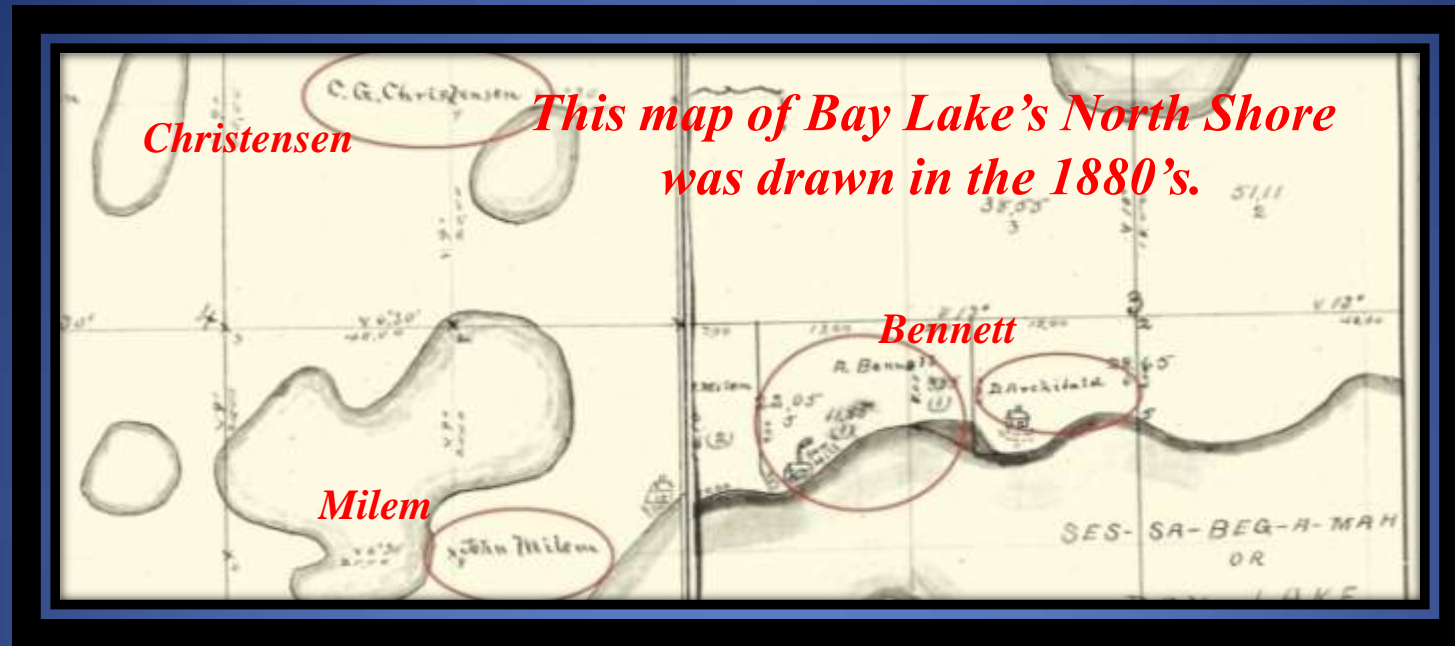


*Nick Newgard, born in Denmark in 1845, settled in Withington (Deerwood) in 1874 where he worked as a laborer on the track gang and at the sawmill.*

*In 1877, he became a part of the first romance in the new settlement when he married Mary Johnson, sister of a Withington area homesteader. Unfortunately she died within a year. He never remarried.*

*In 1882, he homesteaded most of what later became the Hall Property and Birch Lawn.*

# Milem, Christensen & Bennett



*In 1882, John Milem, Christian Christensen & Ashael Bennett homesteaded the northwest area of Bay Lake.*

*Bennett built a sawmill (just east of where Ruttger's Main Lodge is today).*

*In 1884, Bay Lake was established as a voting precinct. John Milem, Dave Archibald and Nick Newgard were named as judges. Milem's home was the first voting place.*

# Henrich Knieff & Louise Wasserzieher

*Henrich Knieff, born in Germany in 1822, married  
Doris Schlaffer in 1853.*

*They settled in New Ulm in 1856 where Henrich  
operated a ferryboat and had a tin shop. After the Civil  
War they moved to Crystal Bay on Lake Minnetonka.*

*Doris died in childbirth in 1868 leaving 7 children under  
the age of 15.*

*In 1872, Henrich married Louise Wasserzieher. They  
returned to Crystal Bay where four more children were  
born.*





# *Knieff (Continued)*



*In 1883, Henrich & Louise homesteaded on the northeast shore of Bay Lake.*

*Their first winter was spent living in Nick Newgard's chicken coop.*

*In 1885, they built their home (1912 picture after additions).*



*Today, their grandson Albert (Al) and his wife Judy own Knieff's Shore Acres and live in the original house.*



# Otto & Adelia Wasserzieher

*Otto Wasserzieher, Louise (Wasserzieher) Knieff's brother, born in Germany in 1837, married Adele Vogt in 1869. (Picture d are Otto, Adele and their son Edward.)*

*In 1883, Otto accompanied Henrich Knieff on his exploratory trip to Bay Lake and, in 1884, he and Adele homesteaded east of Knieff's on the north shore of Echo Lake (now Tame Fish Lake).*

*There wasn't a road, but they could visit by boat traveling across Echo Lake down the Mud River and into Bay Lake.*



# Wasserzieher (Continued)



*This painting, done by Henrich Knieff, depicts the Wasserzieher homestead where they grew berries and apples.*

*Today, their grandson, Ken, and his wife Sharon, live on the homestead (north side of Tame Fish Lake Road at the "Maple Syrup" sign).*

*Later, their son Edward, owned and operated Sunset Cabins, a small resort adjacent to (and now owned by) Ruttger's.*

*He built and operated this steamboat to ferry people on Bay Lake and Echo Lake (now Tame Fish Lake). He had a drawbridge between the lakes.*



*Today, their grandson, Gil and his wife Dorothy, still own property between Ruttger's and Blistain's (the former Archibald property).*

# George & Maggie Hunt

In 1883, George Albert and Maggie Hunt (and their 11 children), homesteaded most the southwest portion of Bay Lake (and a parcel across the lake).

Later, they purchased the northern portion of Hunter's Bay Point (which had been given to the NPPRR).

With Nick Newgard and the Wasserziehers, the Hunts later formed the Bay Lake Fruit Growers, an organization that shipped produce from Deerwood by boxcar.



They built a frame house between the points that are now owned by Birkeland's and Erickson's.

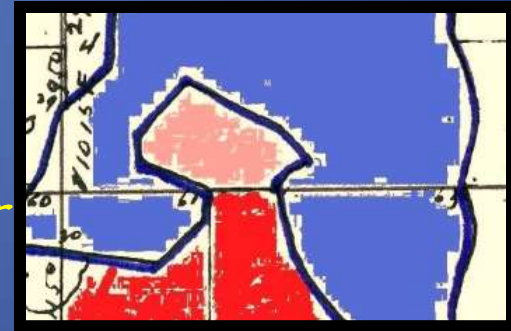
# Hunt (Continued)



*One of their sons, George Wilbur (known as "GW" or "Grandpa Hunt") was a remarkable gardener.*

*He was also a Lay Minister at Nokay Lake, Vineland and Deerwood. He walked to these locations.*

*Their farming operation lead to the development of Hunt's Cannery which was later owned and operated by one of their sons, Ralph, and his wife Alisimon.*



*Many of our "older" residents remember buying sweet corn and berries at the Cannery (often coming by boat) and home baked bread and pies from Ralph's sister-in-law, Silvia.*

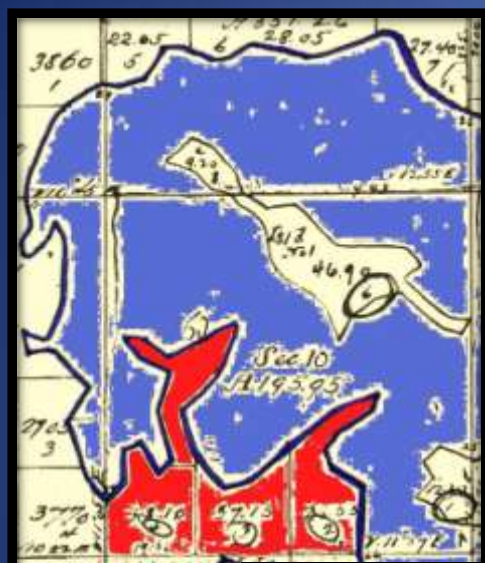


# Charles & Arvilla Wheeler

*In 1882, Charles & Arvilla Wheeler settled in Withington where he held the positions of Station Agent and Post Master.*

*In 1885, they homesteaded what is now Content, Doty's Addition and Bay Lake Shores.*

*Charles died the following year. Arvilla moved to Brainerd where she met and married Albert Miller the son of Charles Miller, an early Garrison area homesteader.*



*Clarence Wheeler, son of Charles & Arvilla, was the first Rural Route 2 mail carrier out of Deerwood. He is pictured with his side-car mail delivery motorcycle on a road that was in front of the current Ruttger's Resort location.*

**Note: Jim Miller is currently writing a comprehensive Miller Family Submission. The information on this and subsequent slides that pertains to the Miller Family and/or the Torrey sawmill may be revised when Jim's submission is complete.**



# Bay Lake Colony



*In 1886, the Pioneer Cooperative Company (known as the Bay Lake Colony), was chartered to be an "experiment in cooperative associations".*

*The colony purchased the Bennett sawmill and likely the Bennett and Milem homesteads.*

*Bennett moved about 6 miles east where he established another sawmill on the east shore of Farm Island lake in a small settlement that became Bennettville.*

*The Colony was a financial failure and it closed the next year, but it attracted a number of pioneers to Bay Lake.*

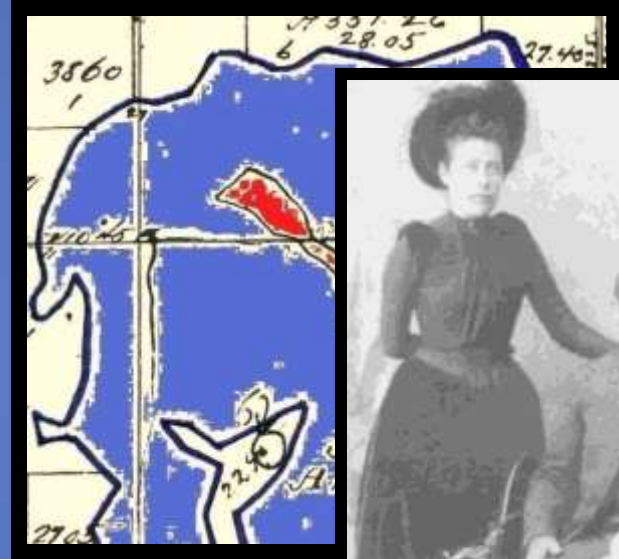
# Joe & Josephine (Wasserzieher) Ruttger

*In 1886, Joseph Ruttger, born in Germany, came to Bay Lake to run the steam engine for the Colony's sawmill.*

*When the Colony closed, he homesteaded what is now Malkerson's Island.*

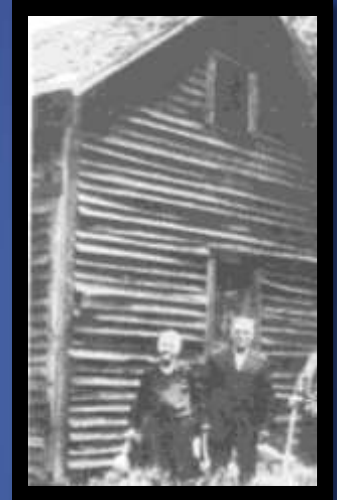
*In the fall of 1889, Josephine Wasserzieher, came to stay with her recently widowed sister, Louise (Wasserzieher) Knieff.*

*About a year later, Joe & Josephine were married in the front room of the Knieff home.*



# Ruttger (Continued)

*They lived in the home Joe had built on the island (picture of Joe & Josephine in their later years by the house which is still on the island).*



*Alex was born in 1892. In 1894, with their second child on the way, they moved to the mainland.*



*Soon afterward, they began construction of the home (that even today is part of the Ruttger's Lodge building) which, later, led them into the resort business.*

*Their grandson Jack, and his wife Ann, and their great grandson Chris, and his wife Joanne, continue the Ruttger's Resort legacy on Bay Lake.*

# Erath Brothers

*In 1886, the Erath brothers came to work at the Colony.*

*They homesteaded the shoreline that is now Sand Beach Park, Greg Road and Wakeman Road as well as a substantial amount of land off the lake.*



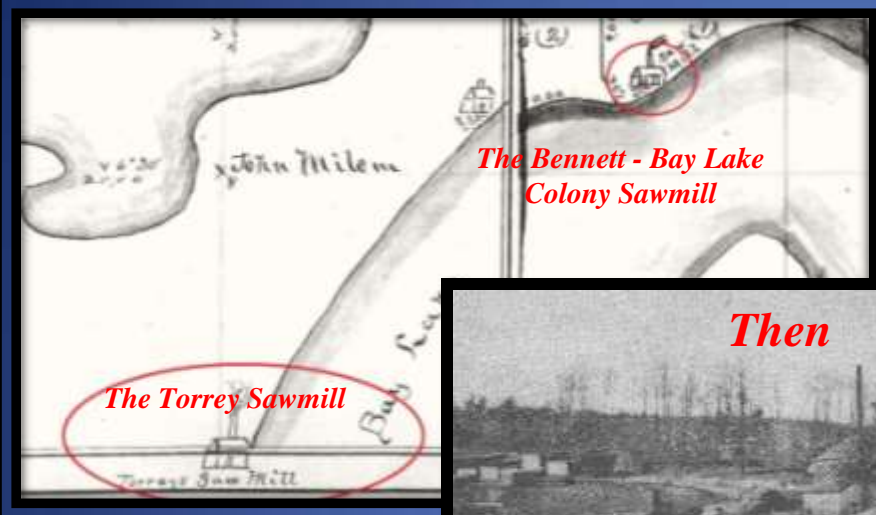
*One of the brothers traveled to North Dakota to work the harvest. He returned soon after the ice had formed. He crossed to Ruttger Island and then Church Island but fell through and drown on Brighton Point.*

*A year or two later, his brother also fell through the ice and drown on Brighton Point.*



# Torrey Sawmill

*When the Colony sawmill closed in about 1887, James Torrey and his son, Ira, who jointly operated a sawmill in Deerwood, built a mill on Bay Lake.*



*The new mill was located across from Indian Point.  
The property is now owned by the Hegenes family.*



# Torrey Sawmill & Indian Point



*Then*



*Now*



*This is a picture of the Torrey sawmill with "Ruttger Island", where Joe & Josephine were homesteaded, in the background.*

*Ira Torrey's house on Indian Point is now part of the Indian Point Resort.*

# Miller Sawmill

In 1897, Albert Miller, from the Garrison area, who had married Arvilla Wheeler, widow of Charles Wheeler, the homesteader of what is now Content, Doty's Addition and Bay Lake Shores, bought the Torrey sawmill.



*Hauling logs across  
Bay Lake*



*Walter  
Waffensmith*

*Bob  
Maghan*

*Ira  
Torrey*

*Albert  
Miller*

*GW  
Hunt*

*Clarence  
Wheeler*

*The Miller Sawmill Crew*

*Today, Albert's grandson, Albert Miller Jr., lives with his wife Muriel on Tame Fish Lake Road.*

# Adolf Lundstrom

*In 1900, Adolf Lundstrom purchased what is now Church Island planning to log the lumber.*

*He'd come to America from Sweden with his son John, after his wife died in childbirth.*

*In approximately 1909, he lost his son to tuberculosis.*

*He decided to return to Sweden and sold his island to the First Lutheran Church of St. Paul for \$1.00.*

*First Lutheran's Bay Lake Camp has been operating on the island since 1926.*





# Arthur, Ester & Gordon Gray



*A Horseless Carriage?*



*In 1904, Arthur & Ester Gray purchased a farm north of the lake.*

*Two years later they purchased land and built a store on the Sessebegamah Trail (note the oxen).*

*In 1919, they sold the store to Ruttger's (now Ruttger's Country Store).*

*They then purchased 8 acres and built a resort.*

*Their son, Gordon, later operated a resort, hardware store and millworks. He sold the store and millworks to Larry & Nancy Thoms in 1969 who turned it into an Ace Hardware Store in 1973 and built a new building in 1989.*



# *Newgard, Hall, Ruttger & “Content”*

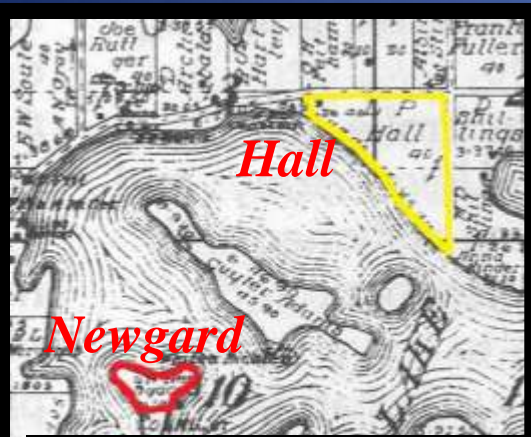
*In 1902, L. P. Hall, an architect from Duluth, brought his bride to Ruttger’s.*

*While on a walk they met Nick Newgard and sometime prior to 1913, they purchased some of the his property.*

*Newgard then purchased a portion of the Wheeler homestead where he built a home.*

*In his later years he asked his friend Joe Ruttger to check on him if smoke stopped coming from his chimney.*

*The smoke stopped. Joe checked. Nick was dead. The property was willed to Joe. Today it is part of “Content” which is owned by the Johnson & Keller Families.*



*Now*

# Adams, Torrey & Roads

*Sometime prior to 1913, Ruttger Island was sold to Cuyler Adams (who discovered iron ore in the Deerwood area .....and whose name was used to name the Cuyuna Range).*

*Later it was sold to the Gold 's, ancestors of the current owners.*

*The original road along the North Shore went along the shoreline (in front of current cabin locations).*

*And, on the NW side of the lake the road went across what is now the Kallestad Farm (i.e. well away from the lake).*

*Ira Torrey, who sold his sawmill to Albert Miller, homesteaded what is now the Hansen Family property and much of Northeast Echo Bay.*



# Waffensmith, Maghan & Bath

*John & Ethel Waffensmith settled SW of Bay Lake. Later generations settled on the east side of the lake (by what is now Waffensmith Road).*



**Waffensmith**

**Bath**

*M. Bath homesteaded the far northeast shore and E. A. Bath homesteaded to his east.*

**Maghan**

*Robert Maghan married Alisetta Violetta (Alice) Miller daughter of early Garrison area homesteader Charles Miller and sister of Albert Miller who took over the Torrey sawmill. They homesteaded by Partridge Lake in 1883. Later generations lived west of Bay Lake (near what is now Maghan Road).*



# Summary of Some of the Early Homesteaders & Settlers

*Christensen*

*Archibald*

*Newgard*

*Milem*

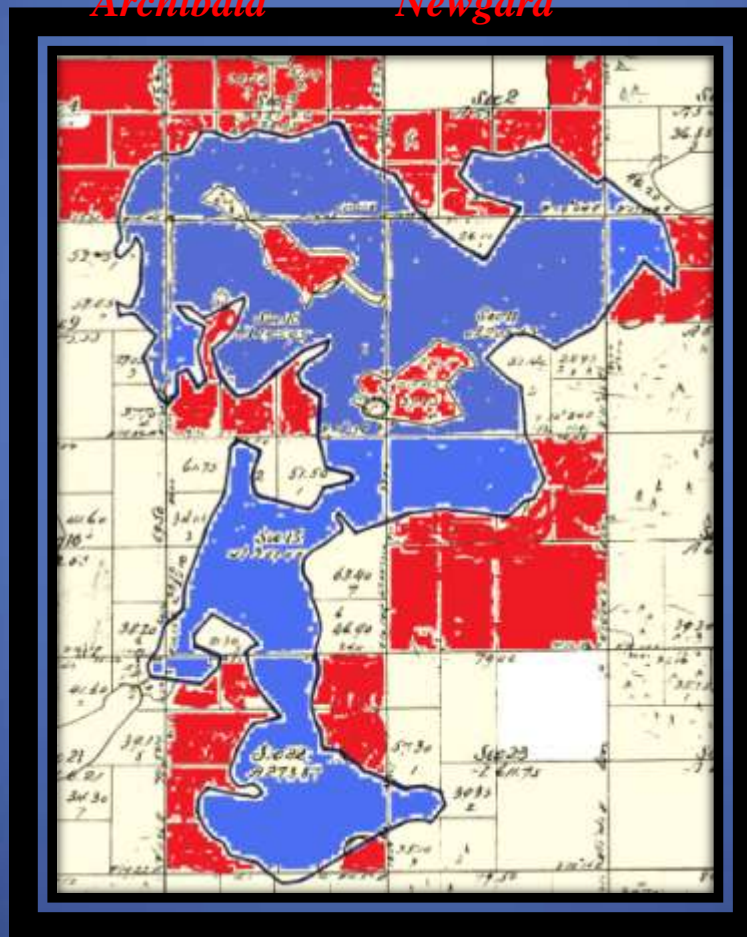
*Ruttger*

*Miller*

*Wheeler*

*Hunt*

*Waffensmith*



*Knieff*

*Wasserzieher*

*Bath*

*Lundstrom*

*Erath*

*Torrey*

*Walker*

*Christensen*

*Maghan*



# Bay Lake Schools

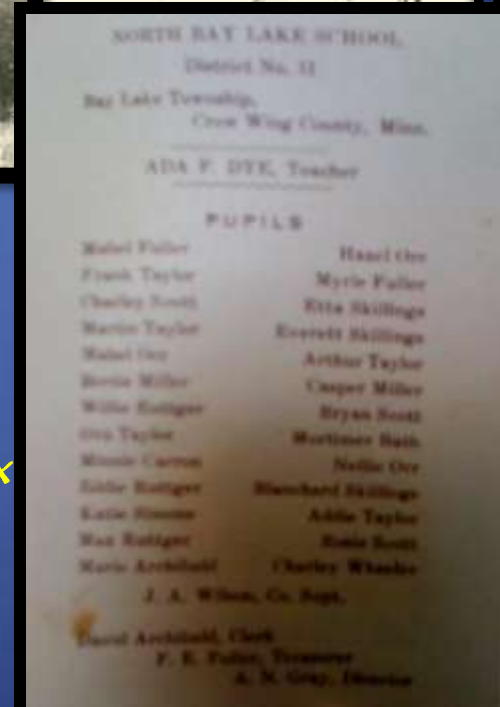
*There were at least 4 Bay Lake area schools.*

*The first school was built in 1884, on land that was donated by John Milem.*

*In 1902 it was replaced by a new building (where Ruttger's tennis courts are today).*

*The original log schoolhouse was dismantled and moved to Deerwood Township.*

*A list of the pupils enrolled in 1910 include the following familiar names: Albert & Casper Miller, William, Ed & Max Ruttger, Marie Archibald, Mortimer Bath, Clarence Wheeler and Myrle Fuller (Alex Ruttger's future wife).*



# Schools (continued)

*Then*



*This picture of the Katrine School was taken in 1917.*

*It was located near Hunter's Bay just north of what is now Eaglewood Road. The two rut road later became Highway 6 and then Eaglewood Road.*

*Now*



*Note that Hunter's Bay is visible in both pictures.*

*In 1962, Highway 6 was relocated and the school house was condemned. Art Hansen (Curt's father) bought the building and moved it to its current site.*



# *A few of the early “Summer People”*

*Until air conditioning became popular it was common for people from Kansas and Missouri to seek the cooler Minnesota climate.*

*In 1901, Frank & Helen Below, from St. Louis, MO, came to Ruttger's and later purchased some of the Archibald property and Bird Island.*

*Their decedents Blistains & Wolfs own the former Archibald property today.*





# The Kansas Colony



*In 1898, Mr. & Mrs., Fred Boone, from Junction City, KS, were Ruttger's first "registered guests" and later they purchased property on the North Shore (now the Tietz home).*

*Over the years they enticed many other Kansas families to buy property on Bay Lake.*

*Eventually the shoreline east of Ruttger's became known as the Kansas Colony.*

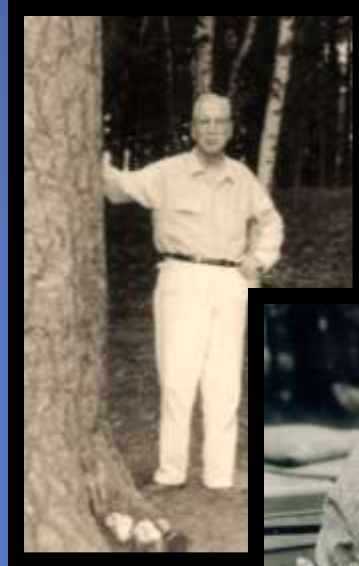
*Springer, Weigel & Wagaman (Manhattan), Boone & Durland (Junction City), Meyer (Atchinson), Holton & Black (Wichita). Additionally, Ritchies bought on the northwest shore and Warehams (Manhattan) purchased the northeast point in the Battle Point/Birch Lawn area.*



# Pierce



*EB, daughter Rhoda (Bud's mom) & son Harmon.*



*EB & Ulla*



*In about 1920, EB & Ulla Pierce (from the Twin Cities) began camping on land that was owned by GW Hunt.*

*Later they were able to buy 4 lots (now Parrish, MacKay, Erickson & Sosey properties).*

*Their grandson, Bud MacKay, still lives on one of the lots.*

# *“Oldtimers” Reunion*



*Gil Wasserzieher*



*Jack Ruttger*



*Bill Aye, grandson of the  
founder of the Kansas  
Colony.*



*Ken Wasserzieher*

*We gathered “Oldtimers” in order to learn about our history.  
In addition to great stories, we heard that Bay Lake is special.*

*Keeping it special is the primary goal of the  
BLIA History Project.*

# Sources

*The contents of this presentation came from interviews and these wonderful books.*



*See how and where to buy them in the History Project section at [baylake.org](http://baylake.org).*

*The End*